

Fond du Lac Reservation Water Quality Standards Fact Sheet

- These standards have been developed by the Fond du Lac Environmental Program's Office of Water Protection, which is concerned with protecting the lakes, streams, wetlands and ground water of the Reservation. Our work is funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.
- In December 1998, the Fond du Lac Reservation Business Committee adopted the standards into an ordinance protecting the waters of the Reservation. The U.S. EPA has been extensively reviewing the standards, to make sure that they are at least as protective of our water resources as the other Great Lakes states' standards. They have suggested several changes to our original standards, which appear in red text in our revised standards.
- Fond du Lac defined our water quality goals by designating uses for each of the major lakes and streams: wildlife, aquatic life, recreational, cultural, agricultural, navigation and commercial. These designated uses, found in Chapter 3, are the basis for the standards that are unique to Fond du Lac, and include special protection for wild rice waters and subsistence fishing.
- The Fond du Lac Environmental Program has been carrying out a water quality monitoring project since the summer of 1998, sampling the water, habitat and aquatic life in the lakes and streams of the Reservation. We will be comparing the data we have collected to our standards, and then be able to determine which lakes and streams are in good shape (in other words, they are fully meeting their designated uses), and which waters need more protection or restoration.
- This public comment period in the process of developing our Water Quality Standards is very important. Not only are band members and other residents of the Reservation encouraged to bring issues to our attention, but also federal, state, county and local agencies are able to make suggestions about technical issues and the language of the document.
- As soon as the Reservation Business Committee approves the revised standards, and the U.S. EPA gives their final approval, Fond du Lac will be the first Minnesota tribe with its own water quality standards. The Environmental Program will be using these standards to continue to protect our valuable water resources, as current and future development projects and activities are considered.